

Case 2613

Sphaeroma hookeri Leach, 1814 (currently *Lekanesphaera hookeri*; Crustacea, Isopoda): proposed conservation of the specific name

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is the conservation of the specific name *hookeri* Leach, 1814. It is threatened by the name *conglobator* Pallas, 1766 and its junior objective synonym *globator* Pallas, 1772, neither of which has been used as the valid name for a species of the family for over 150 years. The authorship and date of *Sphaeroma* is also discussed.

1. Pallas (1766, p. 194) described a new species of isopod as *Oniscus conglobator* and gave habitus figures of it in dorsal and lateral views. The description and figures make it beyond any doubt that the species belongs to the family SPHAEROMATIDAE and that it is either a species of *Sphaeroma* Bosc, 1802 (p. 182) or one of *Lekanesphaera* Verhoeff, 1943 (p. 172). Not enough morphological details are provided by Pallas to place the specific identity of his animal beyond doubt. However, Pallas' locality data make it practically certain that *Oniscus conglobator* is based on specimens of the species currently known as *Lekanesphaera* (or *Sphaeroma*) *hookeri* Leach, 1814 (p. 433).

2. Six years after the publication of *Oniscus conglobator*, Pallas (1772, p. 70–71, pl. 4, figs. 18, 18*) redescribed the species under the name *Oniscus globator* and republished with this description his 1766 figures. That *globator* is a replacement name for *conglobator* is quite evident, the more so as Pallas (1772) referred to his 1766 description and used the same figures for both. In order to make the objective synonymy definite, the specimen figured by Pallas (1766, pl. 14, fig. 18; 1772, pl. 4, fig. 18) is selected now to be the lectotype for both species. In his new (1772) description Pallas made the following remark about the colour of the species, which is not given in his 1766 account: 'Color scuti cinereo-fuscus'. *L. rugicauda* is usually of an ashy grey colour, while *L. hookeri* as a rule is darker and more brownish grey. This again confirms that *O. (con)globator* is the same as *L. hookeri*.

3. The name *conglobator* was from the start almost completely ignored by zoologists, probably because Pallas himself replaced it by *globator*. However the name *globator*, although sometimes mentioned in synonymy, was not accepted as the valid name either. Bosc (1802, p. 186) recognised a single species of *Sphaeroma*, to which he gave the new name *S. cinereum*, placing all older names (e.g. *Oniscus serratus* Fabricius, 1787 (p. 242) and *Oniscus globator* Pallas, 1772) in its synonymy. Leach (1814, p. 405, 433) recognised 3 species of *Sphaeroma*: *S. serratum* (Fabricius, 1787) and the two new species, *S. rugicauda* and *S. hookeri*. In the synonymy of *S. serratum* he cited *S. cinereum* Bosc, 1802 and *Oniscus globator* Pallas, 1772, completely disregarding the

priority of Pallas' name. This synonymy was accepted in most carcinological handbooks and the name *O. globator* was no more used as the valid name, being at the most cited as a synonym of *S. serratum*.

4. Although we are convinced that *Oniscus conglobator* Pallas, 1766, is the oldest available name for *Lekanesphaera hookeri* (Leach, 1814), we feel that a strict application of the Principle of Priority in this case would result in the disappearance of a well known specific name that has been and still is widely used in taxonomic and faunistic studies as well as such dealing with the ecology, biology, and population dynamics of the species. The replacement of this well known name by one that is entirely unfamiliar to most zoologists and which has not been used for the species for over 180 years, should be prevented in the interest of stability.

5. We also take this opportunity to request the placement of the names *Sphaeroma* Bosc, 1802 and SPHAEROMATIDAE Latreille, 1825, on their respective Official Lists. Both names are very well known, are in general use and are the valid names for their respective taxa. The problems concerning authorship, date of publication and gender of the name *Sphaeroma* have been discussed by Jacobs (1987, p. 11). The author of the genus has variously been cited as Latreille, or Latreille in Bosc. However, Bosc (1802: p. 48) although he makes clear that he had seen the manuscript of volume 3 (1802) of Latreille's *Histoire naturelle générale et particulière des Crustacés et des Insectes*, dealt with the genus *Sphaeroma* in his own words, providing new observations made by himself. There is no reason therefore not to cite him as author.

6. As to the date of publication of Bosc's work, Dupuis (1976, p. 4) showed that this is 20 January 1802 or earlier, while Latreille's account of *Sphaeroma* in volume 3 of his above cited work was shown by Dupuis to be published between April and 6 November 1802; Bosc's name therefore has priority. The gender of the name *Sphaeroma* has sometimes been treated as feminine, sometimes as neuter. Dr C. W. Wright, Classical Advisor to the Commission, has kindly informed us that 'Sphaeroma is a Greek word, third declension, neuter' (see also Jacobs, 1987). The correct spelling of the family name was also furnished by Dr Wright, as being SPHAEROMATIDAE; the often used SPHAEROMIDAE is definitely incorrect. We are most grateful to Dr Wright for this information.

7. The name *Lekanesphaera* (the genus to which *Oniscus conglobator* belongs) has a peculiar history. Until 1943 the species of that genus were assigned to the genus *Sphaeroma*. Verhoeff (1943, p. 169) established the new genus *Europosphaera* with two subgenera *Europosphaera* s.s. and *Lekanesphaera*. To the former he assigned two species: *Sphaeroma rugicauda* Leach, 1814 and *Europosphaera (E.) noduliger* nov. sp. Only one species was placed by Verhoeff in the subgenus *Lekanesphaera*, viz., *Europosphaera (Lekanesphaera) excavatum* nov. sp. Both the names *E. noduliger* and *E. excavatum* are considered junior synonyms of *Lekanesphaera monodi* (Arcangeli, 1934, p. 149). Verhoeff did not designate a type for either *Europosphaera* or *Lekanesphaera*, which makes the former an unavailable name (Art. 13b). *Lekanesphaera* Verhoeff, 1943 is available, as *E. excavatum* Verhoeff, 1943 is its type by monotypy. *Lekanesphaera*, being the oldest available name for the genus in question, is its valid name and we request that it be placed on the Official List.

8. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the following specific names for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy:
 - (a) *conglobator* Pallas, 1766, as published in the binomen *Oniscus conglobator*;
 - (b) *globator* Pallas, 1772, as published in the binomen *Oniscus globator*;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
 - (a) *hookeri* Leach, 1814, as published in the binomen *Sphaeroma hookeri*;
 - (b) *monodi* Arcangeli, 1934, as published in the binomen *Sphaeroma monodi* (valid name for the type species of *Lekanesphaera* Verhoeff, 1943);
 - (c) *serratus* Fabricius, 1787, as published in the binomen *Oniscus serratus* (specific name of the type species of *Sphaeroma* Bosc, 1802);
- (3) place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the following names:
 - (a) *Lekanesphaera* Verhoeff, 1943 (gender; feminine), type species, by monotypy, *Europosphaera* (*Lekanesphaera*) *excavatum* Verhoeff, 1943 (a junior subjective synonym of *Sphaeroma monodi* Arcangeli, 1934);
 - (b) *Sphaeroma* Bosc, 1802 (gender: neuter), type species by subsequent designation by Latreille, 1810, *Oniscus serratus* Fabricius, 1787;
- (4) to place on the Official List of Family-Group Names in Zoology the name SPHAEROMATIDAE (correction by Dahl, 1916, p. 28 of SPHAEROMIDES) Latreille, 1825;
- (5) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
 - (a) *conglobator* Pallas, 1766, as published in the binomen *Oniscus conglobator* and as suppressed in (1) (a) above;
 - (b) *globator* Pallas, 1772, as published in the binomen *Oniscus globator* and as suppressed under (1) (b) above;
- (6) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology the name *Europosphaera* Verhoeff, 1943: an unavailable generic name because published without fixation of the type species.

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